DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 125 476 HE 008 054

AUTHOR Esp, Barbarann
TITLE New College Student Profile: Freshmen 1975-76.
INSTITUTION Hofstra Univ., Hempstead, N.Y. New Coll. Educational Research Office.
REPORT NO NCERO-23
PUB DATE Jun 76
NOTE 15p.
AVAILABLE FROM Hofstra Univ., New College Educational Research Office, Hempstead, N.Y.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Planning; College Students; Educational Background; *Educational Objectives; *Freshmen; *Higher Education; Individual Characteristics; Occupational Choice; Personal Values; *Profile Evaluation; *Socioeconomic Background; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS New College

ABSTRACT

Two entrance tests were administered to New College freshmen in September 1975: the American Council on Education (ACE) questionnaire and the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI). The results of the two are summarized and, where appropriate, comparisons are made between 1975 students and students in previous years, as well as comparisons with students entering the other undergraduate divisions of Hofstra University. Additional information found in the student admissions folders was used to develop the profile. (JMF)

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# NEW COLLEGE
# STUDENT PROFILE: FRESHMEN 1975-76

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Barbarann Esp
Research Associate

New College
Educational Research Office

NCERO Report # 23
June, 1976



HE 008 054

Student Profile: Freshmen 1975-76

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of two entrance tests administered to New College freshmen in September, 1975. Where appropriate, comparisons are made between 1975 students and students in previous years as well as comparisons with students entering the other undergraduate divisions of Hofstra University.

## PROCEDURE

Thirty one of the 32 entering freshmen were administered two assessment instruments. The data collected from these instruments as well as information found in the student admissions folders were used in this report. It should be emphasized that the entrance test data is not part of the student's official record and is used for research purposes only.

### Instruments

The two assessment instruments administered were:

American Council on Education (ACE) questionnaire: This is a nationally normed questionnaire administered to freshmen at numerous colleges and universities throughout the United States. It consists of demographic, attitude and rating items.

Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI): This inventory was developed by Heist and Yonge (1968) to assess particular attitudes and values which are relevant in the areas of ego-functioning and intellectual disposition. There are fourteen individual scales and one composite score entitled "Intellectual Disposition Category." The IDC represents six scales measuring reflective thought, interest in analytical and artistic

activities, need for independence and organization of thought processes. This test is a measure of intellectual stlye rather than aptitude or achievement.

** Previously, the C-2 Reading test has also been administered to entering freshmen. However, it has been found that over the past few years the C-2 apparently has not been an effective instrument in predicting resding skills of New College freshmen.

## RESULTS

### Background Information, SAT and High School Decile

High school deciles and SAT scores were obtained from admissions folders.

The mean age of the group was 18 with the majority of the students having permanent residences in Nassau County. A small percentage (7) of students were from other localities such as Maryland, New York City and New Jersey. Comparable information on resident status for freshmen in other units of Hofstra is not available.

Table 1 is a comparison of mean SAT scores and high school deciles of entering freshmen for the past five academic years. The table reflects a trend toward progressively lower SAT scores from 1971 to 1973. In the past two years, however, this trend has reversed. As stated in the 1974-75 Freshmen Profile report, these higher scores reflect a change in admission policy wherein the minimum SAT scores for admission to Hofstra University were raised.

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TABLE 1

Comparison of Mean SAT Scores and High School Deciles of New College Freshmen from 1971 to 1976

| Year of Entrance | N | Mean SAT Scores | | | High School Decile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Verbal | Math | Combined | |
| 1971-72 | 142 | 583.2 | 556.8 | 1140.0 | 2.4 |
| 1972-73 | 108 | 553.1 | 543.8 | 1096.9 | 3.2 |
| 1973-74 | 61 | 523.6 | 520.3 | 1043.6 | 3.5 |
| 1974-75 | 49 | 546.3 | 562.6 | 1108.9 | 2.7 |
| 1975-76 | 32 | 552.0 | 568.0 | 1120.3 | 2.3 |

Compared to students entering other undergraduate schools at Hofstra in 1975, the New College students scored an average of 33 points higher on the Verbal SAT; however, Math SAT and high school deciles for New College and other Hofstra freshmen were approximately the same. This information is reflected in the table below.

Table 2

Comparison of Mean SAT Scores and High School Deciles for New College and Other Freshmen at Hofstra University, 1975

| School | Mean SAT Scores | | | High School Decile |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Verbal | Math | Combined | |
| New College | 553 | 568 | 1121 | 2.3 |
| Other Hofstra | 520 | 563 | 1083 | 2.5 |

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## ACE Questionnaire Results

The information derived from the ACE questionnaire is based on the responses of 31 of the entering freshmen who completed the questionnaire. The following is a synopis of some of the information. A complete breakdown of responses to all questions is available from the New College Educational Research Office. Where appropriate, comparisons between New College students and Hofstra students in general, as well as students nationally are made.

Sixty five percent of the respondents were male and 35% were females. The proportion of male to female students on Hofstra "main campus" is approximately the same as New College. Eighty-nine percent of the entering New College students were between the ages of 18 and 20, with 7% under 18 and 4% over the age of 18. In comparison with other Hofstra freshmen for 1975, the age range is about the same.

Ninety eight percent of the freshmen indicated they were white/Caucasian with the remaining 2 % being Black/Negro/Afro-American.

The socioeconomic background of New College freshmen is approximately the same as that of all other 1975 Hofstra freshmen. Fifty two percent of the students indicated estimated family income between $10,000 and $20,000, with 27 % of the New College students coming from families with incomes over $20,000.

Fifty two percent of the students' fathers were identified as businessmen and another 16 % as skilled laborers.

Nearly all of the respondents fathers (80 %) and mothers (91 %) had completed high school while 37 % of the fathers and 17 % of the mothers held college degrees. New College freshmen are quite similar to all other freshmen at Hofstra and freshmen nationally in terms of parental educational background.

In reference to college residence during the first semester, 33 % of the respondents indicated they planned to reside with parents or relatives,

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while over 72 % indicated that they preferred to live on campus or in a private home or apartment.

The majority of the 1975 freshmen plan to pay for their education by support from their parents (76%) and approximately the same percentage of New College students as Hofstra students are receiptents of scholarships or grants. A low percentage (17 %) plan to take advantage of the college work-study program.

Educational and Career Objectives

Seventy percent of the respondents stated that New College was their first choice in selecting colleges to attend. The most frequent reasons cited for attending New College included the college having a good academic reputation (65 %) and the offering of special education programs (67 %).

Approximately 86 % of the respondents in 1975 indicated that they not only wanted to complete the BA degree, but to continue on to some higher degree such as Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D. or LL.B. In comparison, only 27 % of the Hofstra "main campus" freshmen intend to pursue their formal education past the Bachelor of Arts level.

Table 3 compares career objectives of 1975 New College freshmen, Hofstra freshmen in general, and freshmen nationally.

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Table 3

Probable Career Occupations
(percentage response)

| Career Objective | New College | Hofstra | National |
|---|---|---|---|
| Artist (including Performer) | 7 | 10 | 6 |
| Businessman | 0 | 16 | 13 |
| Doctor (MD orDDS) | 0 | 10 | 9 |
| Educator (college) | 0 | 4 | 6 |
| Educator (secondary) | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| Educator (elementary) | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| Health professions (non- MD) | 14 | 16 | 10 |
| Lawyer | 32 | 13 | 6 |
| Research Scientist | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Other | 18 | 10 | 16 |
| Undecided | 22 | 21 | 14 |

New College freshmen for 1975, as those freshmen who entered in 1974, chose the occupation "Lawyer" most often as their probable career objective. Approximately the same percentage of NewCollege and Hofstra freshmen are uncertain about their future occupation.

Values and Attitudes

As in previous years, the 1975 New College freshmen appear to be more politically liberal than their "main campus" counterparts. Fifty seven percent of the New College freshmen indicated a political orientation of "liberal" or "far left" as compared to only 36 % of the Hofstra students making a similar choice. The students liberal views are reflected in the

responses to particular items on the ACE questionnaire that concern social and political issues. Table 4 presents a listing of the students responses to such questions. It appears that 1975 New College freshmen think of themselves as more liberal in their opinions about population control, women's rights, attitudes toward civil liberties and sexual mores than Hofstra "main campus" freshmen and students entering other four- year colleges and universities.

Table 4

Percentage of Students Agreeing Strongly or Somewhat with Value Items

| Item | New College | Hofstra Main Campus | National |
|---|---|---|---|
| Government not controlling pollution | 87 | 85 | 83 |
| Government not protecting consumer | 83 | 75 | 73 |
| Government should help support private colleges | 83 | 80 | 60 |
| Colleges need more grants, fewer loans | 90 | 87 | 78 |
| Too many rights for criminals | 39 | 51 | 52 |
| Not obey laws against own views | 39 | 32 | 31 |
| People should be paid equally | 23 | 16 | 22 |
| Women's activities are best contained in the home | 29 | 21 | 23 |
| People should live together before marriage | 60 | 45 | 47 |
| Discourage large families | 70 | 53 | 62 |
| Sex O.K. if people like each other | 60 | 56 | 51 |
| Women should get job equality | 100 | 95 | 94 |
| Wealthy should pay more taxes | 76 | 82 | 75 |
| Marijuana should be legalized | 58 | 51 | 49 |
| Outlaw large campaign gifts | 70 | 63 | 59 |

Table 4 continued on page 8

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Table 4 continued

| Item | New College | Hofstra Main Campus | National |
|---|---|---|---|
| Individual can do little to change society | 42 | 46 | 47 |
| Young people are more idealistic than older people | 57 | 62 | 68 |
| Young people understand more about sex | 41 | 55 | 58 |
| Colleges should regulate students off campus | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| Students should help evaluate faculty | 84 | 74 | 76 |
| Abolish college grades | 16 | 15 | 22 |
| De-emphasize organized sports | 30 | 17 | 24 |
| Regulate student publications | 30 | 17 | 24 |
| College has right to ban a speaker | 10 | 15 | 19 |
| Preferential treatment to disadvantaged | 27 | 25 | 30 |
| Adopt open admissions at public colleges | 26 | 21 | 26 |
| Use same degree standard for all | 93 | 79 | 77 |
| Federal government discourage energy use | 83 | 83 | 84 |
| Student's right to ban speakers | 55 | 57 | 58 |

Table 5 presents a breakdown of ACE questionnaire items that concern life objectives which students consider essential or very important. New College freshmen express greater concern with helping others, developing a philosophy of life, influencing the social and political world around them and less concern about financial success and theoritical issues and problems. This is consistent with the responses they made on social and political questions presented in Table 4.

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Table 5

Objectives Considered to be Essential or Very Important (percentage response)

| Objective | New College | Hofstra Main Campus | National |
|---|---|---|---|
| Achieve in a performing art | 10 | 15 | 12 |
| Be an authority in my field | 65 | 70 | 72 |
| Obtain recognition from colleagues | 48 | 51 | 46 |
| Influence political structure | 26 | 12 | 16 |
| Influence social values | 29 | 23 | 29 |
| Raise a family | 42 | 55 | 54 |
| Be administratively responsible | 13 | 26 | 29 |
| Be very well-off financially | 32 | 50 | 48 |
| Help others in difficulty | 71 | 63 | 65 |
| Theortical contribution to science | 13 | 14 | 17 |
| Writing original works | 16 | 17 | 14 |
| Creating artistic work | 10 | 15 | 15 |
| Be successful in own business | 23 | 38 | 42 |
| Help clean up environment | 19 | 22 | 29 |
| Develop a philosophy of life | 77 | 66 | 68 |
| Participate in community action | 29 | 31 | 31 |
| Keep up with political affairs | 58 | 48 | 45 |

Omnibus Personality Inventory

Thirty one of the possible 32 freshmen completed the OPI. A comparison of this year's entering freshmen to 1974 entering students at New College is presented in Table 6.

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Table 6

Mean and Standard Deviations of OPI Results for New College Freshmen 1974 and 1975

| | 1974 | | 1975 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| OPI Scale | Mean | Std.Dev. | Mean | Std.Dev. |
| Intellectual Disposition Category | 4.7 | 1.44 | 4.3 | 1.03 |
| Thinking Introversion | 51.9 | 8.20 | 51.2 | 7.35 |
| Theoritical Orientation | 49.6 | 9.28 | 53.1 | 8.64 |
| Estheticism | 52.0 | 9.73 | 49.1 | 10.06 |
| Complexity | 55.9 | 10.51 | 53.1 | 7.84 |
| Autonomy | 58.5 | 7.40 | 57.3 | 5.80 |
| Religious Orientation | 55.2 | 7.53 | 54.9 | 10.01 |
| Social Extroversion | 52.8 | 8.94 | 53.0 | 8.36 |
| Impluse Expression | 57.3 | 10.80 | 57.4 | 9.63 |
| Personal Integration | 53.1 | 10.06 | 56.0 | 10.83 |
| Anxiety Level | 52.2 | 9.31 | 49.0 | 8.62 |
| Altruism | 52.1 | 10.30 | 54.1 | 9.87 |
| Practical Outlook | 43.1 | 8.41 | 41.2 | 7.36 |
| Masculinity-Femininity | 50.6 | 10.84 | 48.3 | 10.73 |
| Response Bias | 49.1 | 7.80 | 48.1 | 7.21 |

A series of t- tests with a significance level of .01 were performed by comparing the two groups of students. No significant differences were found between the two groups of students on any of the fourteen OPI scales.

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Scale scores for 1975 New College students tended to cluster around the mean score of 50. This suggests that these students are very similar to other entering college students on traits defined by the Omnibus Personality Inventory.

The Intellectual Disposition Category (IDC) of this test was developed by Heist and Yonge (1968) as a way of classifying individuals on a continuum of intellectual orientation or style. New College freshmen over the past three years have fallen in category 4. Heist and Yonge descibe students who fall in this category as those students who often achieve good grades, are strongly motivated, perform well in a competitive intellectual atmosphere yet appear to demonstrate less concern about the intrinsic satisfaction gained from acquiring knowledge.

Summary

The academic achievement level of both 1974 and 1975 entering New College students appear to be the same. Overall mean SAT scores are slightly higher (up 12 points from 1974) and the mean high school decile for 1975 freshmen was 2.3 as compared to 2.7 the previous year. Nineteen hundred seventy five marks the second year of a trend in higher SAT scores at New College, which is most likely a reflection of the change in admissions policies at Hofstra University which have taken place over the past two years.

Generally, 1975 New College entering students were very similar to other Hofstra freshmen in terms of socioeconomic background and parental educational background. As in recent years, the majority of students come from local communities. A larger proportion of New College freshmen than Hofstra "main campus" freshmen chose to live on-campus.

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New College freshmen appear to differ somewhat from other entering students at Hofstra and other students across the country in the following ways: the majority of New College freshmen stated intentions for pursuing their formal education beyond the Bachelor of Arts level; the New College students expressed political beliefs that were "liberal" and their personal value and attitude orientations were consistent with this position; and regardless of specific career objectives, the majority of New College freshmen expressed objectives which would enable them to work with people and ideas.

Results from the Omnibus Personality Inventory tend to confirm the observations made above and suggest that 1975 New College freshmen are just as socially extroverted and intellectually oriented as 1974 entering freshmen at New College.

## References

Heist, Paul and George Yonge. Omnibus Personality Inventory (Form F). New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1968.

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